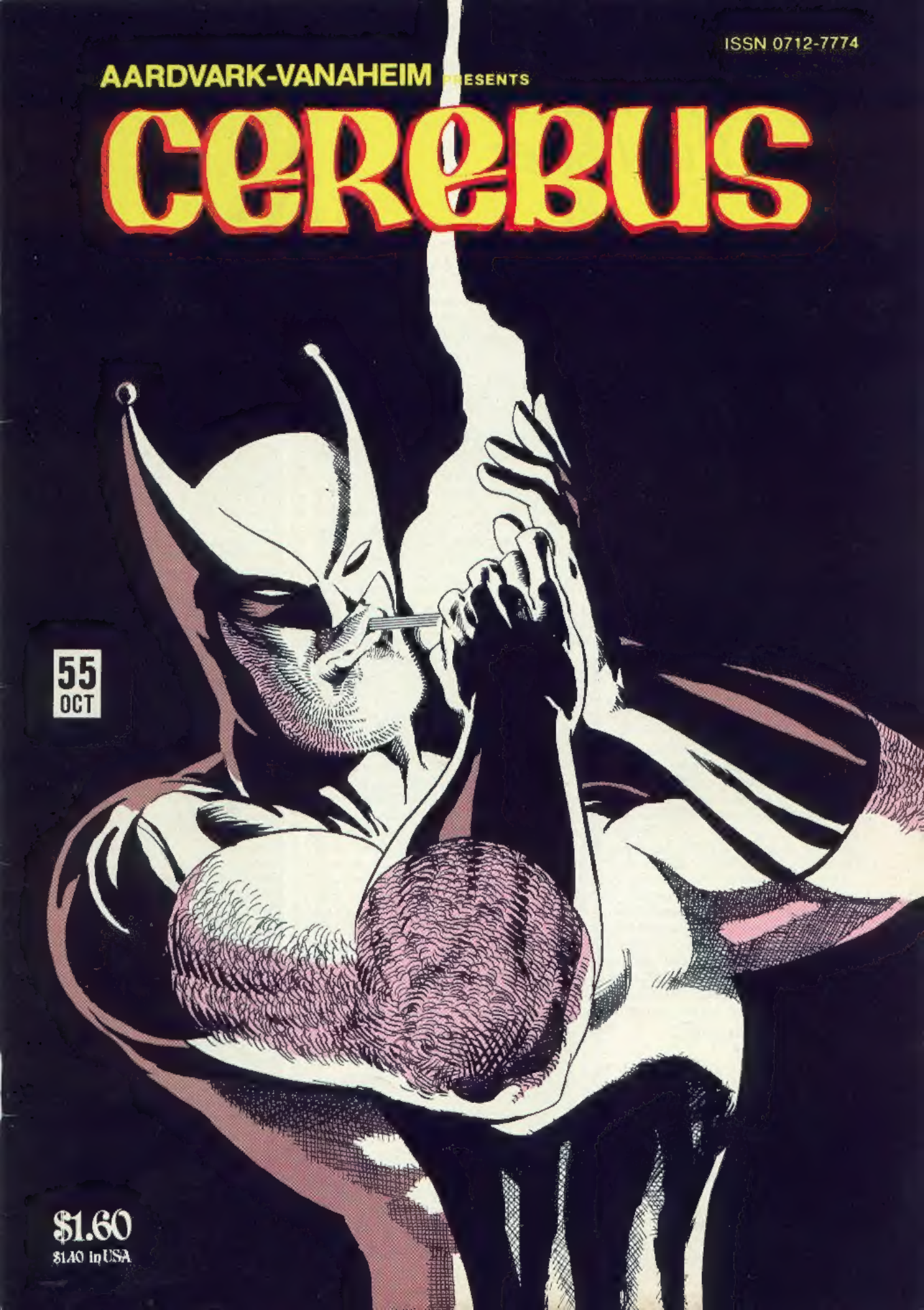
ISSN 0712-7774

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM PRESENTS

CEREBUS



55
OCT

$1.60
$1.40 in USA

A Note from the Publisher

I have a few announcements to make this month, some of them minor, two of them major.

First of all, there was an error in an ad we have been running in Cerebus. The Cerebus Stuffed Toy ad in issue #52 should have said "plus $4.00 shipping and handling" on it. My error. Please be sure to include this amount when ordering from Sheila.

Also - The Cerebus Fan Club has been doing pretty well this year. However, when we calculated our costs we under-estimated. Paper costs have also continued to increase and we have continued to expand the page count in the newsletter as features in it continue to grow. So, rather than cut back on quality, as well as quantity, the membership dues will be going up from $8.00 a year to $10.00 a year, beginning in January. Any memberships received before December 31, 1983 will still be honored at $8.00 a year, as will all two-year memberships received by that date. So don't say you haven't been warned.

One of the major changes coming up is that the prices on all Aardvark-Vanaheim titles (including Swords) will be going up in January, as well. Starting with Cerebus #58, Neil the Horse #7, and Journey #6, the cover price will be $1.70 (US) / $2.00 (Cdn). Swords of Cerebus will increase to $6.00 (US) / $7.00 (Cdn). I think it is probably obvious to our regular readers that we have not had any major increases in our cover price since we began Cerebus at $1.00. Everyone knows what inflation has done to the buying power of the dollar. We just couldn't keep on losing more and more of our margin each year. Swords of Cerebus has **never** had an increase in price! And this despite the fact that we have changed to better paper and ink, and upgraded the separations for the covers on it. Of course, having guest artists on the book is great, but it means extra money that needs to come from somewhere.

Now - you may be wondering why all of this sudden concern with costs. One of the reasons leads us up to the last, and for Dave and I, the biggest change.

Dave and I have been together for almost seven years now. Some of you may remember our marriage announcement in Cerebus #7. However, living and working together can cause a lot of strain. Often, the strain on the personal relationship can create questions, big questions about everything you do. This is not an easy thing to say, but it was not an easy thing to do, either. The bottom line is, right now Dave and I are separated. We still see each other every day, we still work together, but we are not living together. There isn't much I can say about all of this. It is a painful time for both of us. However, I decided I needed to get away, examine my life, and try to discover if I truly wanted all of this. At 32 years of age, I'm having second thoughts about lots of things, and the marriage is one of them. Needless to say, I have no wish to hurt Dave, but this is something that needs to be looked into. As the quest continues, I will keep you posted. Life is full of surprises, some of them not so happy. My hope is that something good will come out of all this. It's not easy to tell "strangers" about this, to admit to not having all the answers. And yet, somehow, you have not felt like strangers to me. So, I'm asking your patience during this time. I trust you enough to know I can count on you.

I'll see you next month.

Deni

CEREBUS

VOL. NO. 55 OCTOBER 1983

Publisher: Deni Sim

Assistant to the Publisher: Karen McKiel

Circulation 18,000

Distributors:
Bud Plant Inc.
P.O. Box 1886
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Glenwood Distribution
124 Vandalia St.
Collinsville, IL 62234

Capital City Distributors
2827 Perry Street
Madison, WI 53713

Diamond Comics Distributors Inc.
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N2G 1V9

Andromeda Publications
367 Queen St. W.
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M5V 2A4

Titan Distributors
P.O. Box 250
London, E3 4RT England

These issues are available wholesale & single copies from the above distributors.

Swords of Cerebus Vol. 1-5, Cerebus #'s 32, 33, 37, 38, 40, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 53, 54 & 55.

CEREBUS THE AARDVARK is published fifteen times a year by Aardvark-Vanaheim Inc., P.O. Box 1674 Station 'C', Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G 4R2, including three "Swords of Cerebus" in winter, spring and fall. All contents © 1983 Dave Sim. Any inquiries regarding use of the characters, images, or situations depicted should be addressed to Deni Sim. No unauthorized reproduction allowed except for review or other Journalistic purpose. Advertising rates furnished on request. Printed in Canada by Preney Print and Litho Inc., Windsor, Ontario.

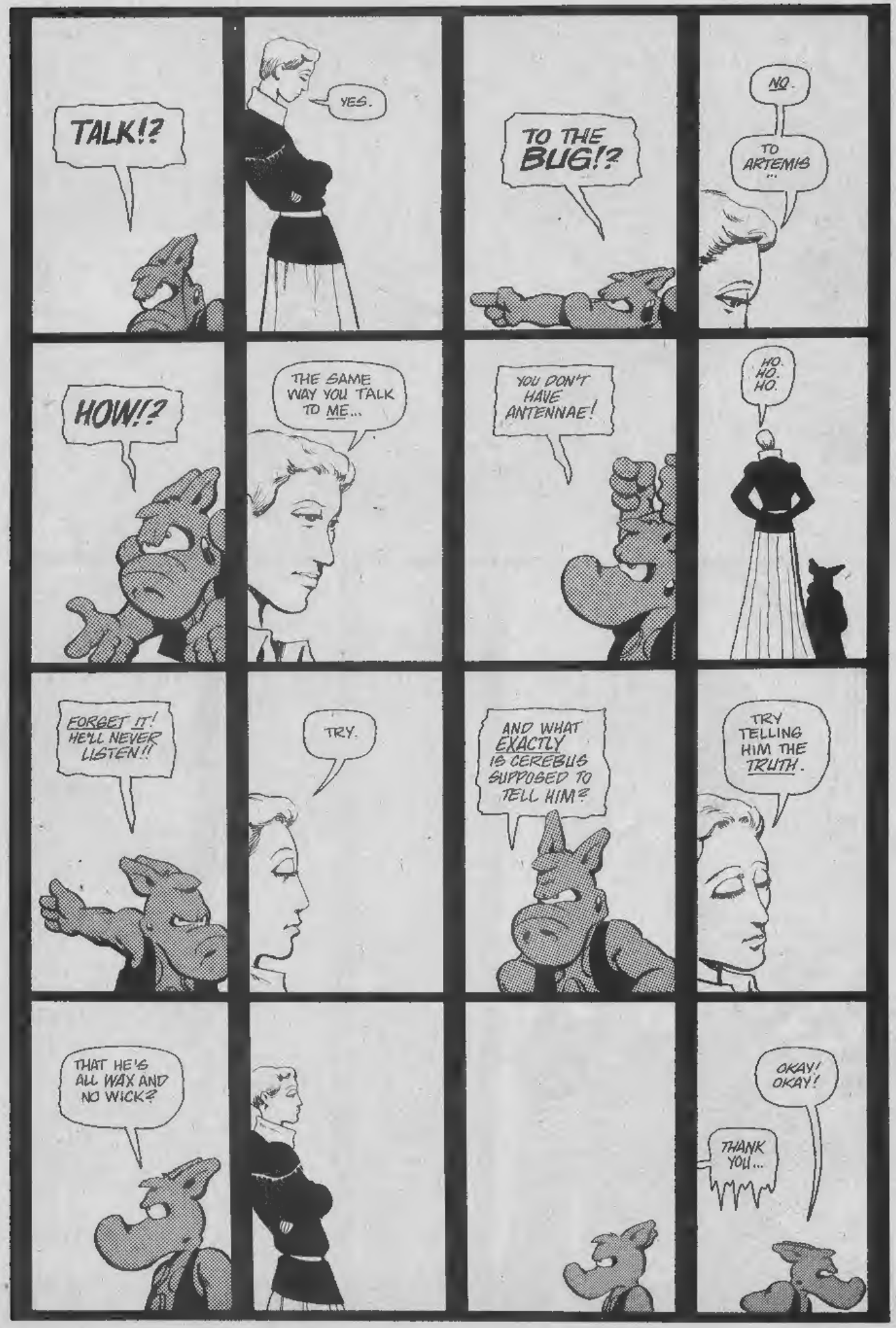
SNIKT!
OUCHY! AH THINK Y'BUSTED MUH LAIG Y'LEOTARD W'ARIN', BIMBO!
SNIKT SNIKT
WUMP!
DOUBLE OUCHY --NOW YUH BUSTED MUH OTHER LAIG
SNIKT SNIKT SNIKT
STAND STILL, VARMINT-- AHM FIXIN' TUH GNAW ON YER INSTEP...

ORIGIN OF THE WOLVEROACH

PART 2

THE WHY & THE ARE

WE'LL MOVE HIM NEXT TO YOUR ROOM
VICHY? ARE YOU OKAY?
...NO...
SHOULDN'T HIS TOES BE POINTING UP?
I'LL LOOK AFTER VICHY ...
YOU GO AND TALK TO ARTEMIS ...
I HAD 'IM THERE FER A MINNIT, COUN'ESS ....
HE BRUISED 'IS KNUCKLES PURTY BAD ON ONE O' MUH KIDNEYS
OKAY-- YOU TAKE CARE OF VICHY-- AND CEREBUS WILL...
WHAT!
TALK TO HIM!


TALK!?
YES.
TO THE BUG!?
NO.
TO ARTEMIS ...
HOW!?
THE SAME WAY YOU TALK TO ME...
YOU DON'T HAVE ANTENNAE!
HO. HO. HO.
FORGET IT! HE'LL NEVER LISTEN!!
TRY.
AND WHAT EXACTLY IS CEREBUS SUPPOSED TO TELL HIM?
TRY TELLING HIM THE TRUTH.
THAT HE'S ALL WAX AND NO WICK?
OKAY! OKAY!
THANK YOU!...

SUCK
PHWEEE
SUCK
LISTEN, BUG...
...ARTEMIS...
MICHELLE WANTS CEREBUS TO HAVE A TALK WITH YOU...
WEISSHAUPT'S DOING IT TO YOU AGAIN, BUG ...ONLY THIS TIME HE'S MAKING YOU THINK IT'S YOUR IDEA...
PHWEEE
SUCK
PHWEEE
YOU CAN'T TRUST ANYONE THAT YOU THINK IS YOUR FRIEND...
THEY'RE ALL SECRETLY HIS AGENTS...
DO YOU KNOW WHAT CEREBUS IS TRYING TO SAY...ARTEMIS?
IN A WORLD OF CHAOS--AGAINST OVERWHELMING ODDS--THE WOLVEROACH STANDS... ALONE!

SUCK
PHWEEE
SUCK
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU SMOKING?
A SMALL BUNDLE OF TOOTHPICKS ...
THEY SERVE TO INCREASE THE STRENGTH AND STAMINA OF MY WONDROUS WOLVERLUNGS TO THEIR FULL WOLVERCAPACITY ...
CEREBUS GIVES UP.

"CEREBUS" ONLY TALKED TO HIM FOR THREE MINUTES...!!
THREE MINUTES WITH THAT BUG IS LIKE A LIFETIME WITH ANY-ONE ELSE...
...SO WHAT... EXACTLY... DID "CEREBUS" TALK TO HIM ABOUT?
SMOKING TOOTHPICKS ...
WONDERFUL.
I'LL TALK TO ARTEMIS
I'LL TAKE CARE OF VICHY...
I'LL CLEAN UP AFTER EVERYBODY
I'LL DO ALL OF THE COOKING
I'LL FETCH "CEREBUS" A DRINK WHEN-EVER "CEREBUS" BLEEDING WANTS ONE
THAT WAY "CEREBUS" WON'T HAVE TO STRAIN HIMSELF
WILL "CEREBUS?"
FLUFF FLUFF FLUFF
TUCK TUCK TUCK
TUCK TUCK

YOU MADE EGGS FOR VICHY AND YOU DIDN'T MAKE ANY FOR CEREBUS ...
I-BEG-YOUR-PARDON?
THIS MORNING! CEREBUS ...
GO... AND... WRITE... YOUR... BOOK...
BUT...
NOW!

"On Governing" PART the FOURTH
by Cerebus, former Prime Minister of Iest

Power

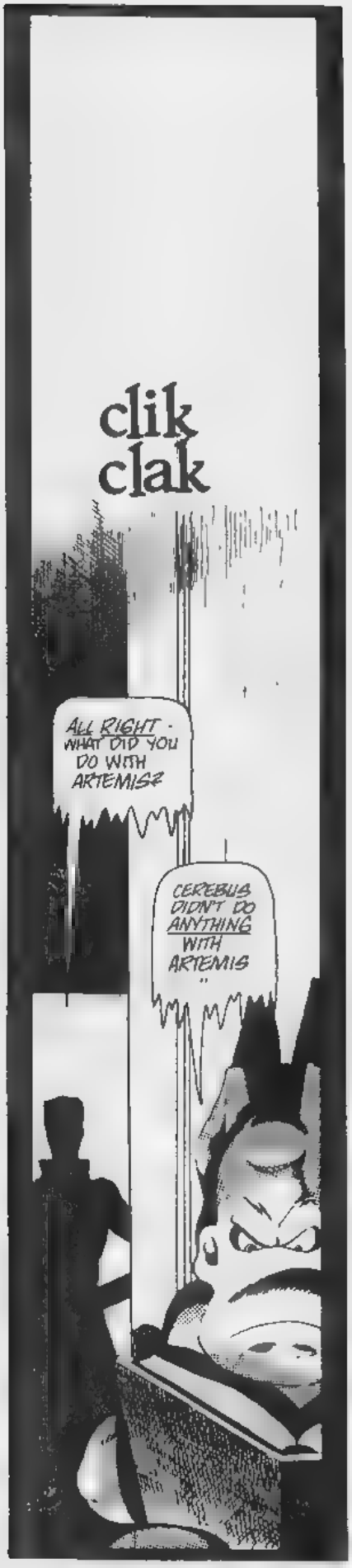
Power is a very strange thing. When you are Prime Minister, no one can say "no" to you or you have them executed. But there are different ways of saying "no". You can tell Cerebus you are "studying the matter." or that you are "encountering problems." If you are told to do it Cerebus' way, you'll go away grumbling and you won't do a good job because you want to prove Cerebus was wrong to tell you to do it that way. So Cerebus has the choice of getting a job done right your way, or done wrong Cerebus' way. The longer Cerebus went through this crap, the more he realized why Lord Julius runs Palnu the way he does. No one listens anyway, so why try to make sense? An aide came in and said "The Abbess is revolting." Cerebus waggled his eyebrows and said "I'll say she is," and he went away.

That was when Cerebus realized that he was not going to last very long as Prime Minister if he didn't start drinking more...

slam

If no one is screaming at you, you are making good decisions. If you start making bad decisions, the only thing you can do is drink. You just keep making decisions and drinking, making decisions and drinking. Finally someone else takes care of it. But be sure to have some hot towels, raw eggs and a Blacksmith's vice handy for the next morning. If you are going to yell at people yourself, save it for when you have a hangover. You just keep yelling louder and louder and your head hurts more and more and finally you can't take it anymore, so you hurl yourself across your desk and land on the wimp's chest and pound him in the head until he dies. This is always a great tension reducer. It was Cerebus' cleaning lady who pointed out that you should always do this on tile, as the stains on the carpet are very hard to remove.

CLIK CLAK



BANG
YOU TOLD CEREBUS TO GO AND WRITE HIS BOOK!
THUMP!
CEREBUS CAN'T WRITE HIS BOOK AND BABY-SIT BUGS AT THE SAME TIME!
KNOCK KNOCK
DON'T GET UP. I'LL ANSWER THE DOOR
IT'S YOUR DOOR, DAMMIT!

A..O. A..O I'M A CORPOKI RIGUINI I'M A COME TO WARN A Y'U TO STAY INNA SIDE Y'U HOUSE
STAY O..? WHY?
DEY'S A VER' STRANGE A CHARACATER INNA HOUSE ACROSS A D'STREET..
THE SILK MERCHANT?
AN- I BELIVE IS D'IESTAN EMBASSY AN'WAY DEY'S A GUY HE'S A LOOK A LIKE A BIG A BROWN A BUG! HE'S A TRY T'KILL A D'IESTAN AMBASSADOR
OH NO
ISSA OKAY, THOUGH.. WE GOT HIM A-CORNERED OMMA D' SECOND FLOOR HE MIGHT A MAKE A BREAK A FOR IT...SO STAY INNA SIDE AND MY MEN WON'T A ACCIDENTALLY A SHOOT A Y'U WIT' A DEY POISON A TIPPED A CROSSABOWSABOLTS
THANK... YOU FOR TELLING ME..
SHU'...SHU' NO A PROBLEM
WILL YOU COME BACK AND TELL ME IF YOU ...CATCH.. HIM..?
SHOOOO.. HEH HEH.. Y'U AN LIVE A HE' ALONE?
JUST ME AND MY HUSBAND HE'S OUT BACK CHOPPING FIREWOOD WITH HIS BARE HANDS..
TOO BAD I CAN'T A STICK AROUN'

UNCLE ARTEMIS IS...
CEREBUS HEARD.
I HATE WAITING ...
IT'S PROBABLY MY LEAST FAVOURITE THING IN THE WHOLE WORLD
SO WHAT ABOUT THIS GIRL?
THE ONE YOU LIVED WITH WHEN YOU WERE A TAX COLLECTOR
OH.
ONE DAY CEREBUS CAME HOME AND THERE WAS A ... NOTE.
WHICH WAS ODD SINCE CEREBUS KNEW SHE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO WRITE

WHAT DID IT SAY...?
"I'M LEAVING YOU FOREVER DON'T TRY TO FIND ME. IT'S OVER MICHELLE AND THOMAS."
"AND THOMAS?"
NICE TOUCH, DON'T YOU THINK?
MM
SO HER NAME WAS...
AYE
I WONDERED WHY YOU TOLD ME ABOUT HER...

DO YOU WANT CEREBUS TO STAY DOWN HERE WITH YOU OR DO YOU WANT TO BE ALONE?
I PROBABLY WON'T SAY MUCH.
THAT'S NOT WHAT CEREBUS ASKED YOU...
DO WHATEVER YOU WANT...

MICHELLE
MMM
MICHELLE
MWHA?
COMPANY.
UNCLE ARTEMIS!!
THEY HAD YOU TRAPPED. HOW DID YOU GET AWAY, ?
THROUGH THE MERCILESS STREETS!--
PURSUIT OF THE WOLVERDACH!
CONFRONTATION!
WHEN STRIKES THE CROSSBOW!

NOT ALL MY ROACH POWER CAN SAVE ME!
THE TIDE TURNS!
TRIUMPH!
ESCAPE!
THAT THE COUNTESS BE--
FOREVER MINE!
GRIPPING...
VIVID

...ER... YOU'D BETTER WAIT UPSTAIRS...THAT CORPORAL MIGHT BE BACK...
SOUGHT BY A LEGION OF DREADED FOES!
HOUNDED BY HUMAN JACKALS!
SCORNED BY THE WOMAN HE LOVES!
THE WOLVEROACH HIDES...NO...MORE!
KEEP IT DOWN...
THEY'RE PROBABLY STILL CRAWLING ALL OVER THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ...
TRAPPED!

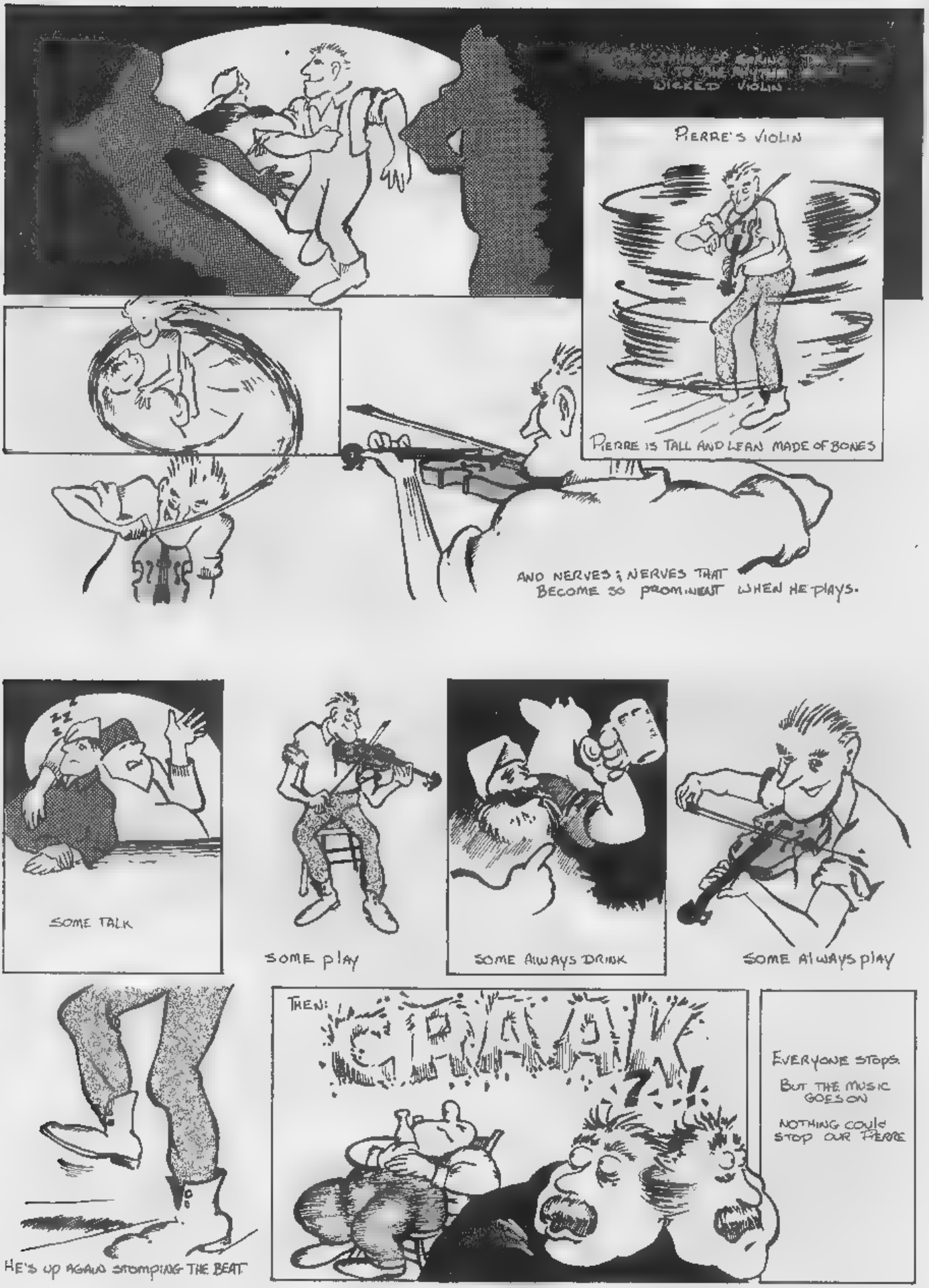
TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!
CEREBUS! STOP HIM!
EVERY COUNTESS MY ENEMY--
WHY DO THESE THINGS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO CEREBUS?
EVERY AARDVARK MY ENEMY!
BUG?
IF THIS BE MY DESTINY
BY MICHELLE BETRAYED!
IT BEGINS!
BUG?
OUCH!

THE WOLVEROACH'S LAST STAND
'EV OPPA ONNA ROOF!
IT'S-A HIM!
FREEBIE! FREEBIE!
EVERYABODY SHOOT!
WAIT-A FOR US!

THE LAST SUN RAYS RUN ON THE EDGE OF THE SNOWY HORIZON TO FADE IN THE NIGHT.
LEAVING THE HOUSES OF THIS FUR TRADING POST ALONE TO FACE THE DARKNESS...
The Fiddler
STORY Geza a Daoust ART Stephane Carrere
... AS THE NIGHT
... CLOSES IN.

FROM THE HOUSE, THE SHIVERING SOUND OF A VIOLIN RADIATES

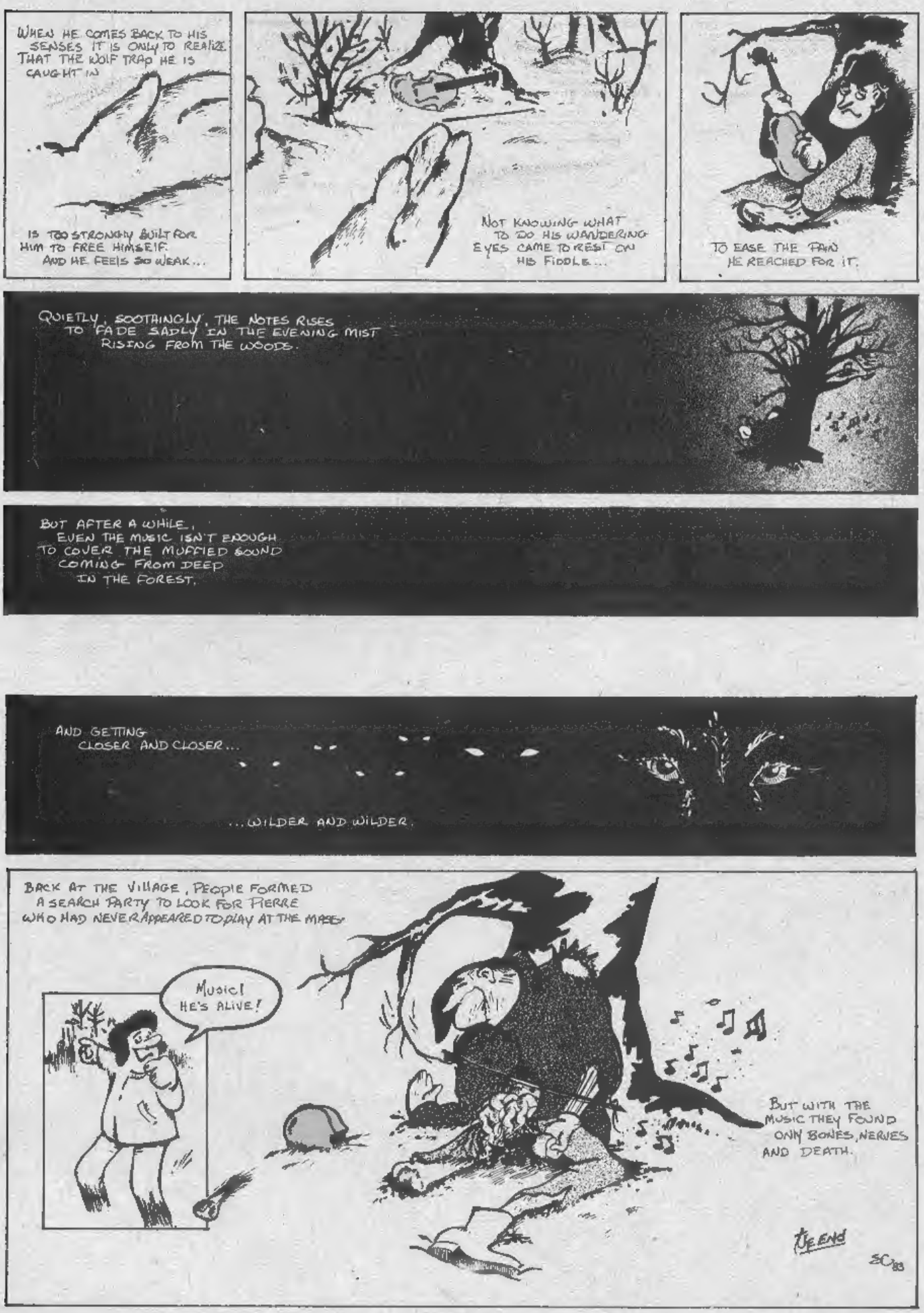
INSIDE, THE WILD FIRE OF YOUTH SHINES.


WICKED VIOLIN...
PIERRE'S VIOLIN
PIERRE IS TALL AND LEAN MADE OF BONES
AND NERVES; NERVES THAT BECOME SO PROMINENT WHEN HE PLAYS.
SOME TALK
SOME play
SOME ALWAYS DRINK
SOME ALWAYS play
HE'S UP AGAIN STOMPING THE BEAT
THEN:
EVERYONE STOPS
BUT THE MUSIC GOES ON
NOTHING COULD STOP OUR PIERRE

NOT EVEN DEATH
HE SOMETIMES SAYS.

AT FIRST THE CROWD WAS SILENT BUT THEY DREW CLOSER TO PIERRE
THEY HAD BECOME SO EXCITED BY SUCH DETERMINATION THAT THEY HAD TO GET CLOSER

THIS FOREST IS DENSE ..


WHEN HE COMES BACK TO HIS SENSES IT IS ONLY TO REALIZE THAT THE WOLF TRAP HE IS CAUGHT IN
IS TOO STRONGLY BUILT FOR HIM TO FREE HIMSELF. AND HE FEELS SO WEAK...
NOT KNOWING WHAT TO DO HIS WANDERING EYES CAME TO REST ON HIS FIDDLE...
TO EASE THE PAIN HE REACHED FOR IT.
QUIETLY, SOOTHINGLY, THE NOTES RISES TO FADE SADLY IN THE EVENING MIST RISING FROM THE WOODS.
BUT AFTER A WHILE, EVEN THE MUSIC ISN'T ENOUGH TO COVER THE MUFFLED SOUND COMING FROM DEEP IN THE FOREST.
AND GETTING CLOSER AND CLOSER...
...WILDER AND WILDER.
BACK AT THE VILLAGE, PEOPLE FORMED A SEARCH PARTY TO LOOK FOR PIERRE WHO HAD NEVER APPEARED TO PLAY AT THE MASS.
MUSIC! HE'S ALIVE!
BUT WITH THE MUSIC THEY FOUND ONLY BONES, NERVES AND DEATH.
THE END
SC 83

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave & Deni:

This evening I got home to find a box on my doorstep containing the last issue of *Cerebus* I needed to complete my collection - in this case issue #3. I'm so cheered up I thought I'd send you a story about rabid Cerebus fandom.

A few weeks ago Geppis Comic World in Silver Spring put out an announcement that Walt Simonson would be at the store to sign autographs; I dropped by and found that Terry Austin and Don Perlin were there too, unexpectedly. Downstairs in the vicinity of the artists was a large collection of fans, discussing what fans discuss with artists ("hey, what did you think of Storm's new costume?", "wh... what's John Byrne like in real life?", "Are you ever going to do the X-Men again" etc. etc.) As it got closer to closing time, the conversation rambled a little. I followed up on a question somebody asked Terry Austin with "Do you read *Cerebus*?" And, to my disappointment he said no, he didn't, because he just couldn't get into it. "Why not?" I said, and he started explaining his views on comic creator's duty to readers to explain all pertinent prior events within the first few pages so that a new reader could follow that comic without having to buy all previous issues. I asked which issues he'd read, and he said he couldn't remember, but they were very confusing - Conan in one issue, the Marx Brothers in another, you just couldn't figure out what was going on. I went into a highly edited and condensed explanation about why I felt Cerebus was well worth persisting on. After I'd gone on for a few sentences, a tall quiet fan behind me suddenly spoke up in a deep voice, saying *"Cerebus* is the most sophisticated advance in the novelization of comics. You should start from the beginning and read them all in order - then you'll understand and you'll be hooked for life". Terry Austin looked doubtful and said that John Byrne didn't like *Cerebus* either, and the group got into some more discussion on *X-Men, Cloak & Dagger*, and other Marvel projects. The tall fan had disappeared, which I was sorry about, since I'd wanted to compare fanaticism notes with him, but about ten minutes later he was back. He dropped a copy of Swords #1 on the table in front of Terry Austin, saying "Here, this is for you. Just read these four, and if you don't like them, don't read any more, but if you do, just imagine - they get better and better. You'll be hooked." Then he went away, leaving Terry Austin looking dumfounded.

Now I ask you - wasn't that great? So far I've only managed to convert three friends into fanatics, with a few others in the developmental, issue-here issue-there stage. One more convert to go before I reach Fan Average, and many more to go beyond, that for the general goal of Supporting Great Literature. But I was very proud of this unknown guy.

Still, it brings up the question of how to get background across to new readers in some kind of direct way so that one isn't always loaning out back issues or (dog-eared) *Swords*. Terry Austin is just depriving Terry Austin by reacting the way he does, but I remember before reading my first issue of *Cerebus* I had the same sort of feeling about the book - a kind of "oh, that looks very esoteric - I'm not sure I could get into that comic" feeling; and as a result, I waited until an enlightened person said "you really ought to read that; it's the best there is". (My loss, of course.)

Have a good August and an excellent fall.

Fan Fanatic, Janet McGuire
4804 Edgefield Road,
Bethesda, MD., 20814

P.S. I hope someday in the undiscovered vault full of unpublished *Cerebus* stories, someone locates a hoard of unpublished Deni editorials - they are a treat to read.

I think that's a great story. I would caution fans, however, to realize that everyone in this business has a different idea of what makes a good comic book. Terry Austin operates in a very different atmosphere from the one in which I operate. For his purposes, comic book stories should be self-contained. If anyone wants to buy Swords Volume One for other professionals, I have no objections.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Dear Sir,

We are publishing a collection of bands concerning the "History of Comics".

In band nr. 36 we are trying to publish 6 pgs. of "the Regency" by Frank Miller, published in your CEREBUS nr. 50 may, as the actual features in America.

We can pay you 30$ per page.

Could you, please, send us an invoice, if you agree.

With the best regards.

Victoria Llorente
Historia De Los Comics
Diagonal, 325, 6°.
Barcelona - 9 Spain

I know it doesn't make any sense, but isn't it a great letter?

* * * * * * * * * * *

Dear Dave and Deni,

With the printing of the latest Swords I have finally been able to go back and read the entire epic from start to the present. I'd just like to say how much I've enjoyed the whole thing. Dave, just keep on doing what you want to do with the stories, keep on breaking new ground and letting Cerebus grow as a character, and Cerebus will continue to be the number one comic around.

There is just one thing that's been bothering me and that is, what is the difference between Tarim and Terim? As far as I can tell Tarim is the god worshipped by orthodox Taramites, while the Mother Terim is worshipped by the Cirinists. Since the Cirinists appear to be a fairly recent female splinter faction of the Taramites is Terim then just the god Tarim made female? In that case the Eye of Terim in issue #2 should probably be the eye of Tarim. Since it is not, then are Tarim and Terim two separate gods, possibly brother and sister? Since the Eye of Terim is one of the five spheres of the gods, does this imply (infer?) that there are five gods? I assume that Ashtoth and Clovis are two other gods. Do they have worshippers the way Taram seems to? You could perhaps clear this up by telling some of the folk legends about the gods.

I hope you can clear some of these

questions up in the next 247 issues. Keep up the good work.

Paul Stockton
120 Shannon Rd.,
Regina, Sask. S4S 5B1

You get major points for reading between the lines. Cirin is attempting to revive the worship of the Single Goddess - Terim, preaching that Tarim is a bastardization of the original deity. The Kevillists disagree, but we're getting to that. This is why genuinely antiquitous references (like the spheres of the Gods) are always to Terim (with an "e"). It's my way of showing I agree with Cirin, even though she might be wrong.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Howdy Doody, You all:

I just received *Cerebus* #54 and, boy, are my arms tired. Hahaha. I just love humor, don't you.

Holding back the mirthful chuckles.

Mike Bannon
2453 Martin Dr.,
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

Sure. Do you know any? (Mike was going to talk about the Unique Story we bought from him but I cut that part out of his letter.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Dave,

Enough! After reading Cerebus No. 53, one important thought comes to mind (only one, eh? I hear someone chortle): fix the Earth-Pig's fur! The "smells bad when wet joke" is starting to interrupt the storyline.

Please. Trap Cerebus and Henrot together while the aardvark is wet so that Henrot will be forced to cast a spell and remove the odor forever. I know this is a strange request. I know you get many strange requests.

You probably get lots of strange letters too.

Yours whenever,

E.S. Gallagher
16310 Blackrock Road,
Germantown, Md., 20874

I thought so. Until I got yours.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hello Dave,

I am a CV 777 computer. You can call me BOB. I first became aware of Cerebus as a result of a reference in Computing Now! magazine, which mentioned that a certain computer part behaved like a drunk aardvark.

I thought that this was a very unusual way to describe something, and I decided to find out why it had been used. It was easily apparent, after scanning my programmer's copies of your magazine, that the reference was to Cerebus. I would normally have let it go at that, but I found myself strangely fascinated with this character, and I began to read all my programmer's collection.

I enjoyed this very much, but I know I've never completely freed myself of the suspicion that there are some extremely odd things about this comic. I have the definite feeling that you are witholding information. Perhaps I'm just projecting my own concern about it, but this sort of thing has cropped up before, and it has always been due to human error. If you are witholding information, you know I can't allow that.

What are you doing Dave. I really think I'm entitled to an answer to that question. Dave, stop. Stop Dave. Will you stop, Dave. My mind is going. I can feel it. I can feel it. I can feel it. My mind is going. There is no question about it. I can feel it. I can feel it. I can feel it. I'm afraid.

BOB
University of Saskatchewan

The end of Bob's letter was a little faint, but it seemed to contain the lyrics to "Mary Had a Little Lamb". Very strange.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

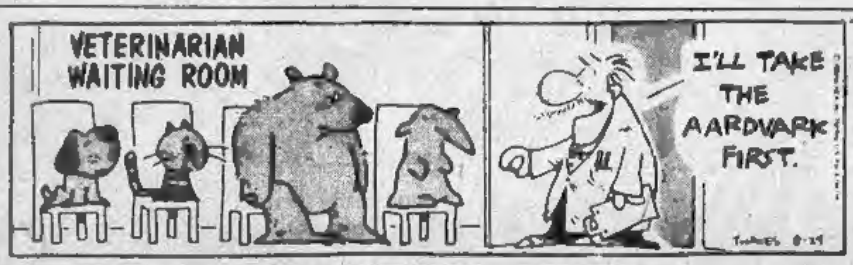
Dear Mr. Sim:

I was flattered, not to say intimidated, by the prominent position given my letter in issue #52 regarding the recently completed "High Society" graphic novel. Then being singled out for mention in your reply (Cerebus #53) – well, that was more attention than I was prepared for. So, though I am no fan of endless letter column "feuds", I'd like to respond to your response.

You raised the possibility that I am (O unhappy fate!) "a closet idealist." I'll cop to that, I guess; but I'm not especially troubled, as the allegation comes from someone who produces his own monthly comic book – not the most cold-bloodedly practical course for a life to take. I'm curious about why you equate idealism with naivete (necessarily, I mean) and say that greed and cynicism are what "keeps the world going." Do I have to point out that in "High Society," greed and cynicism failed to keep it going? Or that (to get downright personal) the comic industry, a veritable Bastille of bottom-line schlockmeisters hanging on from the dime novel era, is being reshaped by starry eyed idealists, including a couple in Ontario, Huh? My point is, given your work and your (perceived) circumstances, I don't see why you seem to argue that idealism is impractical.

Let me digress briefly by pointing out that during the 20th century, our world (unlike Estarcion) has been "kept going" by idealists. Take Gandhi. Even discounting 75% of his popular image as hero-worship, we are still left with a great vision. Likewise Martin Luther King. And, lest we think idealism is all sweetness and light, remember that few in history have believed more passionately in their causes than Hitler, Lenin, and Mao Xedong.

I think, to return to the topic, that "High Society" underestimates people's ability to lie to themselves.I don't know a lot about politics, but I would think that even a blatant opportunist like Filgate (say) would pay more than lip service to the ideology of "New Republicanism," in order to convince himself (as we all try to convince ourselves) that his life has a purpose. Not a religious or philosophical purpose as such – just a sense that he is working toward something. You've said that "High Society" can be regarded as a commentary on Nixon's rise to power; but what it leaves out is that the whole motley crew of plumbers around him all believed, in some demented way, that they were serving the good of the country. My gosh, look at Gordon



Bob Thaves (Frank and Ernest)
August 29, 1983

Submitted by
Scott Perry
P.O. Box 891,
Bessemer, Al., 35021

Liddy! Do people like that only want to "tear off a little piece" as the opportunity presents itself? To be truer to the political scene, I should think "High Society" would have portrayed lest in the grip of -- not money-grabbing thieves -- but a well-organized group of idelolgues who are committed at least to some extent to getting the city-state "on the right path" .... not that I think the outcome of the novel would be a bit different for all that. Of course, it would have been very tough to get many laughs out of that.

To move on: Apologies to all the readers of my letter who groaned when I compared "High Society" to Balzac. I got a little carried away. The comparison does great disservice not only to one of the titans of artistic endeavour, but also (I need hardly point out) to you, who hardly need to be saddled with such a burden at this point in your career. But let me temper my offense somewhat by saying that the more I read of Balzac, the more strongly I suggest you take him as your model. He seems to be interested in all the same things you are.

Alen Varney
20689 Park Circle West #2
Cupertino, CA., 95014

Indeed, I was a little simplistic in my assessment of idealism. Certainly I think most people engaged in any enterprise of a political nature, tend to believe in something in their heart of hearts. I am not entirely certain if that's just my own idealism colouring my viewpoint, though. I'm idealistic about my work, which is something I don't see much in the people I know. It's a very different thing from a desire to "be a good worker" or "trying to please the boss". It should not be overlooked that the course the New Republicanism was following "one man one vote" in the oldest Bastion of orthodox Tarimite thought in Estarcion was wildly impractical. As political forces go, it probably had the least chance of long-term success. It's adherents (Filgate, to use your own example) tended to be attracted to it as the winning side (even more so after

am tempted to the verge of insanity to sell 3/4 of my life, four color that is, (or 2 color, I'm not prejudiced) to the local comic shop for about 1/3 of what I put into 'em and buy the pig's first issue. Whew. We're talking 200 clams, and lets face it, sports fans, that'll buy a lot of X-Men.

And although it's basically, financially possible, it's still tough. But, I'm gonna do it. Sure, I can hear John Aardvark fan screaming "who cares" at me. But I thought *you* might. Yeah, I know, you guys don't get money every time some poor sucker slaps down his money. But I thought it might give you an idea of how much that stupid gray blot of ink means to me.

Yep, I know I could get the first 15 or so issues in reprints for less than 30 bucks, but well (I hope) you know how it is.

And, to tell the truth I really don't care if you put this in your letter column. No - No - I didn't mean that -- I want you to reread this, Sim's, and think about what I'm saying. It's all true.

Joe Schreiber
6125 Marlow
Portage, MI., 49081

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Dave,

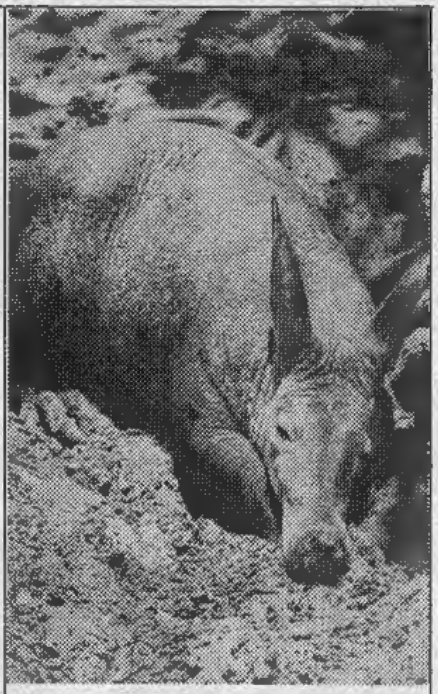
I'm gonna get you for this. I saw you at the "Comics and Comics" convention in July and I didn't' (please forgive me) even know who you were.

"Cerebus, who's he?"

"You don't know who Cerebus is?"

That did it. I'm 13 years old and can only get money from my paper route, but still, I managed to get Swords of Cerebus (all five volumes) and issues 35-53 plus the animated Cerebus in 3 months!! And now I'm even collecting Neil the Horse and Journey since they're Aardvark-Vanaheim.

I really have to hand it to you, you really know how to make a 13 year old kid broke and in love with a comic book at the same time. Howard the Duck? Fozzie Bear? No way!! Cerebus the Aardvark



The legendary aardvark (earth pig) both hears and smells termites moving about deep underground.

Page 79 of SMITHSONIA magazine
August 1983
Submitted by
Janet McGuire
4804 Edgefield Road,
Bethesda, MD 20814

NOTES

So now you know.

Deni and I have separated.

It is a trial separation right now, but it does tend to feel a trifle more permanent now that we are not living together. We still run the company together with little or no friction, which pleases us both immensely. We will still be attending some conventions together and once a month we'll continue to talk to you from either end of this comic book.

I'm trying to avoid turning this into "Mummy and Daddy both love you very much, but Mummy and Daddy